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The Evangelical Association as  
a factor in the development of  
the west.

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THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION AS A FACTOR IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE WEST

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Submitted by  
Frank Ross Blakely in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts.

Department of History, College of Liberal Arts.  
Northwestern University  
1914.

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Published by Charles Hammer for the Evangelical Association 1858. The oldest published History of the Denomination. The period from the founding of the Church till 1845 is covered in the first volume. The original intention was to write a second volume but this intention was never carried out. It is a compilation of such material as could be gathered from Periodicals. Oral narratives and the few documents that were extant. The Author was a contemporary from 1828, at which time he entered the ministry of the Church.

Yeakel.

Publishing house of the Evangelical Association, Cleveland, Ohio, 1894; \$2.00 per volume.

Volume I is largely a recast of the earlier history of Orwig. Volume II is brought down to 1875.

Evangelical Annals, by A. Stapleton. The Official history of the United Evangelical Church.

Publishing House of the United Evangelical Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1896.

The section on the History of The Evangelical Association contains many points not found in the older histories. Contains a digest of the conference proceedings and general meetings from 1800 to 1886.

The section on the United Evangelical church is the only published history of The United Evangelical Church. Price, \$3.00.

Flashlights of Evangelical History.---A. Stapleton.

Published by the Author, 1908. Sold by the Publishing House of the United Evangelical Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Price, \$1.00. A collection of Incidents in the history of the Evangelical Association.

Life of Seybert.---S. P. Spreng.

Published for The Evangelical Association by Lauer and Mattill Agents; Cleveland, Ohio. 1888.

Albright and His Co-Laborers, by Reuben Yeakel.

Lauer and Yost, Cleveland, Ohio. 1883. Price, \$1.00.

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The Life of Bishop Long, by Reuben Yeakel.

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Platte River conference Proceedings, 1888 ff.

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by Reverend J. W. Mohr, of Joliet, Illinois.

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## CHAPTER I.

The People of Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup>

Pennsylvania, the birthplace of the Evangelical Association, presents a study in nationalities that is seldom found in any other state. French Huguenot, Swiss, German, and Scotch Irish have blended to produce a people peculiar to Pennsylvania alone.

The Swiss were driven out of Switzerland at the time of the fearful religious strife that was rending all Europe in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The French Huguenots were driven out of their homes by this same religious strife in the latter part of the seventeenth century. They emigrated to the Carolinas and later made their way into Pennsylvania from the south. The descendants of these people were among the first to receive Albright, the founder of the Evangelical Association.<sup>2</sup>

The Germans were principally from the lower Rhinish provinces known as the Palatinate. Persecution forced them like the Swiss and French to seek a new home, and they turned to America. They came to Pennsylvania in such great numbers that the governor became alarmed and went before the colonial council in 1717, and stated that great numbers of Germans were coming into the country without producing certificates, and dispersing themselves wherever they pleased. He considered them dangerous and asked the council to do something to safeguard the people already established

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1. The best reference works on the Pennsylvania are "The German and Swiss settlements in Pennsylvania," by Muhlenberg, "The Germans in Colonial Times," by Lucy Worsley Bittinger, and "The Making of Pennsylvania," by Fisher.

2. Evangelical Herald, p. 70.

in Pennsylvania. The result was that all males over sixteen years of age were required to take an oath of allegiance.

By 1775 it was estimated that there were 100,000 Germans in Pennsylvania. In some of the counties nine-tenths of the population was German. They scattered over Adams, York, Berks, Montgomery and Lancaster counties. Some of them went down the Cumberland and Shenandoah valleys and mingled with the Scotch Irish. Everywhere the German was found.<sup>2</sup>

It is readily apparent from the foregoing statements that the greatest factor in the history of Pennsylvania was the Germans. Naturally they would leave a deep stamp on the people of Pennsylvania. This is very evident in the prevailing customs<sup>3</sup> in Pennsylvania. The French and Swiss have modified them some, but in the main they are still German. If anyone doubts the influence of the German in Pennsylvania, he need only make a study of the language to be convinced that they have been the most potent factor in the making of the great state.

It is generally called Pennsylvania Dutch. Many French, Swiss, and English words have been incorporated in it; Provincialisms have been coined; yet the greater part of it can be traced back to a dialect called Pfalz, which was the language of the Palatinates in Germany. All nationalities adopted the language and it became practically a state language. Newspapers and almanacs and various books and pamphlets were printed in the Pennsylvania Dutch. Some of the periodicals were still in existence at the beginning of the present century.<sup>4</sup> In such towns as

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3. For a full discussion of the customs see Kuhns "German and Swiss Settlements in Pennsylvania," or Bittinger's "The Germans in Colonial Times."

4. The Reading Mirror. 3d. vol. 1. p. 200. 1800.

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Reading, Bethlehem, and Allentown the business is still conducted very largely in the Pennsylvania Dutch. Their love for their mother tongue is shown by the prayer introduced into the litany of the Lutheran church in 1786, which reads as follows:<sup>5</sup> "And since it has pleased Thee chiefly by means of the Germans to transform this state into a blooming Paradise, and the desert into a pleasant pasturage, help us not to deny our nation, but to endeavor that our youth may be so educated that the German schools and churches may not only be sustained but may attain a still more flourishing condition."

In Europe most of these people had been members of some church. The majority of them had been Lutherans. There were, however, adherents to the Moravian, Mennonite, Schwenkfelder, Dunkard, and Reformed Churches. Since they had left Europe to escape religious persecution and worship in their own way, we would naturally expect them to be very devout when they had a chance.<sup>6</sup> In most cases the records show that they did not devote themselves to worship. This was especially true of the Lutherans and Reformed churches. The smaller sects seemed to have better success in keeping up the old habits of devotional worship. This was, perhaps, due to the Pietistic tendencies of the smaller sects, and the formality of the larger ones.

For the first two or three decades the Lutheran and Reformed people did very little. Kuhns attributes it to lack of Pastors and lack of settlement.<sup>7</sup> Stapleton<sup>8</sup> says it was, perhaps, due to

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5. German and Swiss Settlements in Pennsylvania. p 121.

6. See Kuhn's or Bittinger on the "Pennsylvania German Settlements"

7. Kuhn's "German and Swiss Settlements in Pennsylvania."

8. Evangelicalism, p 11

the hardships of the pioneer life. Whatever the cause may have been, the result was that many of them drifted away from the church. Children grew up unbaptized, and without religious training. Morals were loose, drunkenness was a common thing. Most of them made no attempt at righteousness. Muhlenberg and Boehm published reports in the *Halliche Nachrichten*<sup>9</sup> that paint the conditions in very dark colors. Kuhns thinks they have overdrawn the conditions, but Stapleton does not seem to think so. Bishop R. Yeakel in *Albright and his co-laborers*, quotes from an article published in the *Lutheran Observer*, No. 1107 in which the author says, "Cockfights, race courses, the bowling alley, dog and bear fights, etc., were more largely attended than the House of God."<sup>10</sup> Bishop Saybert, who grew to manhood in these conditions says, "In the year 1800 the German population of Pennsylvania was made up chiefly of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, old school and new school Baptists, Schwenkfelders, etc. The majority of the Catholics and largely the Reformed were guilty of gross violation of God's law. Profanity, Sabbath desecration, drunkenness, etc. were quite common among them. Baptism and confirmation, with an occasional reception of the Lord's Supper constituted the essentials of their religion."<sup>11</sup>

While these conditions were rather general until 1830 we are not to infer that all the Pennsylvania Dutch were spiritual and moral degenerates. Kuhns says that when Muhlenberg came to Pennsylvania, people flocked to hear him preach. Some would go as far as 200 miles to listen to a sermon and receive communion.<sup>12</sup>

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9. *Evangelical Annals* P 14.

10. "*Albright and His Co-Laborers*" P 61.

11. " " " " P 61.

12. "*German and Swiss Settlements*"

Whitfield with his preaching started a wave of Pietism that was to result in the reformation of Pennsylvania.<sup>13</sup>

Among the preachers of the time were Martin Boehm, William Otterbein, Christian Newcomber, and Anthony Hautz. These men are of special interest to us because of their close association with Albright, the founder of the Evangelical Association.<sup>14</sup>

Hautz was the preacher under whose preaching Albright was converted. The other men labored with him for a number of years and finally became the founders of the United Brethern church. They, perhaps, would have remained with Albright, but he was a firm believer in organization and they were not, and for a number of years the United Brethern Church had little or no organization. It was largely due to the efforts of these men that the reformation took place in Pennsylvania. They were the pioneers of a movement which Albright and his co-laborers organized and broadened until it finally reached the Pacific.

We propose in this thesis to consider this movement and its relation to the development of the West.

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13. "German and Swiss Settlements in Pennsylvania." Kuhns, P 155

14. See the early chapters of "Albright and His Co-Laborers."

## CHAPTER II.

## The Founders of The Evangelical Association.

The four outstanding characters in the early Evangelical Association are Jacob Albright, John Walter, George Miller, and John Driesbach. Most prominent, and generally called the founder of the Evangelical Association, is Jacob Albright, a typical Pennsylvania Dutchman who was converted under the labors of Rev. Anthony Hautz<sup>16</sup> and a layman by the name of Adam Riegel.<sup>16</sup>

He was born in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, May 1, 1759. His father was John Albright, a Palatinate German.<sup>17</sup> The family were Lutherans, and Jacob received the customary religious training for a few years, and was then confirmed. After this nothing more was required of them except an occasional attendance at the communion service.<sup>18</sup> Albright was like all the young men of the time, and as soon as possible, he began to sow the crop of wild oats which was to prove a source of regret to him in his later years. He relates that while he was engaging in the wickedness of the day, that the spirit of conviction was with him and kept troubling him.<sup>19</sup> This spirit of conviction was deepened in 1790 by the death of several of his children. It was at the funeral of these children that he heard Rev. Anthony Hautz<sup>20</sup> preach. Speaking of his condition at that time, he says, "I was afraid of myself. The judgments of God were before my mind. My spirit was surely in such a state of depression that no external allurements could dispel the gloom. The feeling of my unworthiness

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16. Albright and His Co-Laborers P 23    16. Orwig, Hist. Evan. Assoc. P 10.  
 18. Ibid.    P 30    19. Albright and His Co-Laborers. P 22.  
 17. Ibid.    P 1    20. See note 1.



increased until, in my thirty-second year in the month of July, it reached a degree bordering on despair."<sup>21</sup> After a struggle of almost a year he was finally converted in the home of Adam Riegel.<sup>22</sup>

Education: Albright's education was rather limited.<sup>23</sup> The free school system was unknown at that time so the people who wanted their children educated were compelled to send them to a private school. The private schools of the age were far from perfect in what little they did teach. The study of anything more than reading, writing and arithmetic was considered as a waste of time. It was in one of these private schools that Albright received the limited instruction in reading, writing and ciphering.<sup>24</sup>

The instruction was in German and seems to have formed the bases for a good German vocabulary and diction which he is said to have acquired in his later years. In his later years when the English was beginning to creep in and displace to some extent the German, he is said to have taken the English dictionary and mastered enough of the English language to be able to give a very creditable English address when the circumstances required it. His library was, of course, limited. He had one commentary, a Bible, a catechism, and a hymn-book, which formed the greater part of his theological library.

As to his moral life, there is not and never has been, any question. Kuhns, in his book on "The German and Swiss Settlements in Pennsylvania," speaks very highly of him.<sup>25</sup> Orwig says, "He denied himself all illicit pleasures, and by fasting and prayer and constant meditation upon the word of God, he overcame his sinful propensities so completely that he hated everything sinful

<sup>21</sup>. Albright and His Co-Laborers p. 20

<sup>22</sup>. See note 1.

<sup>24</sup>. A term to denote arith.

<sup>25</sup>. Albright and His Co-Laborers p. 20

instinctively and found his delight in doing all possible good."<sup>26</sup> The condition of the churches and especially of the German churches of the age weighed heavily on him. He could see little hope for the Germans being bettered as long as the church was in the condition it was at that time. It was while pondering over these conditions that the call to the ministry came to him. This ministry was not a result of ambition to form a new sect but rather of a love for his countrymen and an intense desire to help them.<sup>27</sup>

Church Relations: Shortly after his conversion Albright began to seek for a church home. The various German churches would have very likely been closed to him, even had he cared to affiliate with any of them. So he united with the Methodist Church.<sup>28</sup> This, indeed, if we may judge by the experience of others, was about the only one that he would not have been excluded from.<sup>29</sup> He pronounced himself as pleased with them and did his utmost to live according to their rules and discipline.<sup>30</sup> He was soon exhorting his German friends, and became a very zealous missionary among these people. He withdrew from the Methodist church in order that he might work among the German people only when he found that there was no possibility of persuading the Methodists to make an adequate provision for the Gospel among the German speaking people.<sup>31</sup>

He was not an eloquent speaker, though he is described by his biographers as a ready and powerful speaker, and he had the knack of convincing an audience even though he sometimes angered them

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26. Hist. Evan. Assoc. P 13, Orwig 29. Albright and His Co-Laborers, 36

27. " " " P 13ff " 30. " " " " " 38

28. " " " P 15 31. Kuhns, P 190. See note also.

in doing it.<sup>32</sup>

In method he was somewhat original, A letter from Bishop Yeakel to Orwig, in 1855 records the story of an old gentlemen, Samuel Schultz, who told of hearing him preach at a Schwenkfeld funeral. This was his first introduction to the community which felt the effect of his preaching for years after.<sup>33</sup> Oftentimes his first approach to a community would be similar to the above.

In personal appearance his biographers describe him as being taller than the average and well proportioned, graceful in his movements and careful in his habits.<sup>34</sup>

John Walter: When Albright first went to Bucks County, he preached at the home of a man by the name of Walter. It was here that John Walter heard him and was converted. He became attached to Albright and went with him to Lancaster County to learn the brick and tile making trade. In 1800 he began to go with Albright on his preaching trips and began first to exhort, and then in 1802 he began to preach.

n He had little education, less than Albright, yet his natural abilities seem to have made up for it in a large degree, for Dr. Schmucker of the Lutheran church said on numerous occasions that he was a powerful preacher and that if he had had a classical education that he might easily have become the first preacher in the country in his day. Sketches of his sermons show a depth of thought that is remarkable for an unlearned man. A few of his letters are still extant and they show a deep interest in the religious needs of the day. He, like Albright, was an extensive traveller among his own countrymen. When Albright died he was one

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32. Albright and His Co-Laborers. P 17.

33. Orwig's "Hist. of Evan. Assoc. P 19

34. Albright's "Hist. of Evan. Assoc. P 19

of the men who kept up the work that had been started, and it is due as much to his persistence as to Albright's vision that the Evangelical Association was successful.

A little older than John Walter was George Miller. He received a limited education in the German language and very good home training. About 1802 he became acquainted with Albright when he came to him and asked for a night's lodging and later for permission to preach in the home. In 1805 he started out as an itinerant minister under the direction of Walter and Albright. Miller was the author of the first edition of the discipline. While Jacob Albright was the founder of the church, Miller was perhaps one of the most influential men in the organization.

The youngest of this notable quartette of preachers was John Driesbach who was licensed to preach in 1807. This license which is still extant is the oldest Evangelical license in existence. He was one of the first members of the Board of Publication and seems to have had a great deal of the responsibility thrust upon him. He was also one of the men with whom Bishop Asbury of the Methodist church consulted about a union of the two churches.

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35. For source of this see "Albright and his Co-Laborers."

## CHAPTER III.

## The Founding of The Evangelical Association.

1796 to 1815.

The Evangelical Association was not so much the result of direct reflection and deliberation as it was the result of circumstances. Jacob Albright was a member of the Methodist Church<sup>56</sup> and it is quite probable that if he had been encouraged instead of discouraged by the ministers of that church in the work of evangelizing the Germans that he would have never organized the Evangelical Association.<sup>37</sup>

Albright was an exhorter<sup>38</sup> in the Methodist church and did efficient work as such, but he was not satisfied with conditions among the Germans and his field, as he thought, was among them. For a number of years he exhorted among them and did what he could to change conditions. His suggestions that he should form German classes were not heeded, and in 1796 the need so impressed him that he yielded to his own convictions and saddled his horse and started out as an evangelistic preacher.<sup>59</sup> Not many sources in his early ministry are available so it is hard to tell exactly in what order he visited the points that are mentioned by his biographers and the historians of the churches. Stapleton says that the first definite information we have is concerning his preaching at Shaefferstown on the occasion of the dedication of the Reformed church.<sup>40</sup> Yeakel says that after preaching a few times in his own community he went to Montgomery County where he preached to the Schwenkfelders for some time.

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36. Hist. Evan. Assoc. Yeakel P 42. Evan. Annals P 18, Evan. Assoc. Crwig, P 15.

37. Kuhns' "German and Swiss Settlements in Penn." P 190.

38. Evan. Annals Yeakel, P 19. 39. Hist. Evan. Assoc. P 47.

40. Evan. Assoc. Yeakel, P 19.

His first field of labor was known as the Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit. East of the Susquehanna river he travelled extensively in Lancaster, Berks, Bucks, and Northampton counties. West of the Susquehanna he travelled in Northumberland, York, and Cumberland during the first four years of his ministry. Later Lehigh, Lebanon and Dauphin counties were included in this circuit.<sup>42</sup> This work seems to have been largely in the nature of missionary work and no attempt was made at first to organize any classes. Ordinarily the meetings were held in the homes of the people.<sup>43</sup> Services were held in the church where the community was not so bitterly opposed to them that they closed the church against them. Meetings were often held in the open air and the people were glad to attend them. Albright's method was to gain an entrance some way and then, if the people would permit it, he would return and take up a regular appointment. Oftentimes the wrath of the public was only turned away from him by the fact that he was preaching at the home of some prominent person in a community. Some homes were closed to him because the owners feared persecution. In one or two instances he was assaulted in his public meetings and escaped injury only because of the interference of kindly disposed friends.<sup>44</sup>

ORGANIZATION:<sup>45</sup> Albright labored among the Pennsylvanians and the Marylanders for about four years before he made any effort to organize them into any sort of an organization. By 1800 his converts had become so numerous that he saw that it was necessary to form them into some kind of an organization and so he organized

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42. Evan. Annals P 24.

43. This statement is the result of an investigation of all the Histories on the subject.

44. Evan. Annals P 25.

45. Ibid. P 26.

History of Evangelical United Brethren



them into three classes.

The first was organized in Bucks county five miles east of Quakertown on what was known as the Ridge. Chas. Bissey and wife and the family of Peter Walters were the members of the class. Peter Walter was the leader of the class. The second class was twenty miles southwest of this at the Colebrookdale Iron works in Berks county. The families of Samuel Liesser and Abraham and Joseph Buchwalter were in this class. Samuel Liesser was the leader. The third was along the Blue Mts. in Hamilton township, Northampton county. In this were the Phillips families, the Reidy family, the Phillip, Miller family and Barbara Hecht. Conrad Phillips was the leader of this class.

The leaders were to conduct regular prayer meetings and see that the members of the class conducted themselves in accordance with the word of God, etc. This is the first semblance of an organization that we have and it really is the beginning of the influence on the surrounding country for from this time on the church began to flourish and to make a difference in the life of the community where it was located.

The work soon needed more attention than Albright could give it alone and it is regarded by the Evangelical historians as almost providential that John Walter<sup>46</sup> had come under the preaching of Albright among the first and was soundly converted. About 1801 he went with Albright to learn the brick and tile makers trade, and in the same year he began to accompany Albright on his preaching tours. As a result he became an excellent exhorter. The next year he began to preach and is credited with a great deal of common sense and natural ability.

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46. History of Penn. Assoc. Methodists, p. 10.

Albright now began to branch out and do things on a larger scale. One of the things introduced at this time was what came to be known as a big meeting. This later developed into the quarterly meeting. They were usually begun on Saturday afternoon and continued until Sunday evening. These meetings gave an opportunity to get together in a social way as well as a religious way, and were a decided help in developing a neighborhood spirit. The first of these meetings was held in 1802 on the day of Pentecost at the home of Samuel Liesser.<sup>47</sup> The latter part of the same summer another one was held at the home of John Thomas in Mifflin County. About a thousand persons from different parts of the country gathered at this second meeting.<sup>48</sup>

✓ 1803 was an important year in the history of the association for several reasons. First of all, another itinerant was added to the ranks of the preachers in the person of Abraham Liesser.<sup>49</sup> This gave them a chance to spread out over more territory and take better care of what the members had already gathered. Another event of importance was the first general council<sup>50</sup> held at the home of Samuel Liesser in Berks county. Besides the three preachers there were present fourteen laymen from the various classes. The Holy Scripture was declared to be their rule of faith and Jacob Albright was acknowledged to be their leader. They gave him a certificate attesting their belief that he was a minister of

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47. History of Evan. Assoc. Yeakel P 52

48. Ibid. P 54

49. Ibid. P 54

50. Annals P 22. See also footnote.  
Hist. of Evan. Assoc. P 22.

the Universal church and as such he was solemnly ordained by the laying on of hands.<sup>51</sup>

For a while after 1803 the work in Bucks, Berks, and Northampton counties seemed to die out.<sup>52</sup> This caused the leaders to push out to the Northwest into Northumberland and Center and surrounding counties. This circuit was called Shamokin at first and later Northumberland. It was not long until it was extended into Mifflin and Huntingdon counties.<sup>53</sup> In 1805 Lancaster and Dauphin counties were entered.<sup>54</sup> George Miller was a man who was to become the leader when Albright fell three years later. He was licensed and began preaching.<sup>55</sup> Miller was sent to the old circuit and seems to have been very successful for we find that classes were formed at Mushlbach, Tulpehocken, the Schwamm<sup>and</sup> Paxton near Harrisburg. Miller was a tireless and a fearless worker. He plunged into the "Big meetings" and carried them on successfully.<sup>56</sup>

THE FIRST CONFERENCE.<sup>57</sup> The year 1803 had been remarkable in many respects for the little band of Christians, but 1807 was to be far more important for it was to mark the beginning of a more compact organization. The work had grown to such a size that it was now felt that conferences were necessary and in November of 1807 the entire body, consisting of five itinerant preachers, three local preachers, and twenty class-leaders and exhorters met at the home of Samuel Becker at what is now Klinefeltersville, Pennsylvania.

51. Evan. Annals P 22

52. Hist. Evan. Assoc. Orwig 28

53. Hist. Evan. Assoc. Yeakel P 70

54. " " " Yeakel 80

55. Evan. Annals pp 56, 57

" " " Orwig 83

Evan. Annals. P 23.

56. Ibid. 49ff

57. Hist of Evan. Assoc. Orwig P 28

The name of "The Newly Formed Methodist Conference," was adopted. John Driesbach was licensed in a formal way and given a written license signed by Albright. Albright was elected Bishop and George Miller elder. John Driesbach and Jacob Frey were received as probationers. The Conference recommended that the Episcopal form of Government be adopted and directed Albright to prepare and publish same. After some study he recommended the Methodist Policy to the conference and it was adopted by them. Albright was directed at this time to prepare a system of Rules of Faith. This task, however, was never completed by him because of his early death.<sup>58</sup>

1808 marks the fall of the leader of the Early Evangelical Association.<sup>59</sup> Although his death was a severe blow to the little company, they rallied bravely under the leadership of Miller and Walter, and went on with their work. That year Miller began the work of compiling the discipline.<sup>60</sup> John Driesbach began to reach out and do effective work and others came to the front and helped in the work.<sup>61</sup>

The second conference<sup>62</sup> was held in 1809 at the home of George Miller in Albany township, Berks county, during the month of April. Six ministers were present at this session. George Miller was elected chairman and John Driesbach secretary. One of the most important things that was done at this session was the action ordering the printing of the Discipline, and a small Catechism which

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58. Orwig Hist. of Evan. Assoc. P 36

59. Ibid P 39

60/ Ibid P 36

61. Vol. 1, Yeakel's Hist. Evan. Assoc. P 96

62. Ibid P 100

Driesbach had translated from the English into the German.

The name of "The So-called Albright People," was adopted. This was the first public acknowledgment of any intention to form a denomination separate from the Methodists, and it is quite possible that even yet there was no definite idea of doing so, for two years later, Diesbach, in reply to Asbury's invitation to come into the Methodist Church offered to do so if they were given German conferences and allowed to work among the German people in the German language.<sup>63</sup>

During the next year great progress was made. Five new classes<sup>64</sup> were formed. In 1810 the third conference was held at Muehlbach, Pennsylvania. Miller was again the chairman and Driesbach the secretary. Walter received permission to publish a hymnbook and Miller similar permission to publish a biography of Albright. The most significant thing for our consideration is the action of the conference directing John Erb and Matthew Betz to form a new circuit in York, Adams, Cumberland and Franklin Counties.<sup>65</sup> This, in modern times, would be the equivalent of sending a new missionary into a new territory. From this it is seen that the church was gaining ground and spreading out as the country developed.

One of the most important events of the year 1810 was the introduction of the German camp meeting.<sup>66</sup> These meetings were held in the woods on some farm and were attended by persons who often came as far as a hundred miles with their families. An added impetus was given to the social life by this movement. Other

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63. Vol. 1, Yeakel History of Evan. Assoc. P 108.

64. Ibid. P 104.

65. History of Evan. Assoc. P 104.

66. Ibid. P 104.

questions than religious would be discussed in the intervals between the services. Friendships that would result in influencing politics and governmental problems would be formed and thus the pioneers would be united into a more compact form.

It was during this year that Bishop Asbury conferred with John Driesbach and offered him a place in the Methodist church. Driesbach was to give up the German and learn English. Driesbach replied that if Asbury would give them German circuits, districts, and conferences that they would make his church their church and be one people. Asbury's reply was "This cannot be, it would be inexpedient."<sup>67</sup> There was no anger on the part of the men and they parted as the best of friends, but from that time on the existence of the Evangelical Association as a separate body was never questioned. It is quite possible that if Asbury had acceded to the request of Driesbach, that they be given German organization with the Methodists, that The Evangelical Association would not exist as a separate body today.

The fourth<sup>68</sup> conference session was held in 1811 at The Muehlbach in Union County. The membership of the church was recorded as 740. Three circuits were in existence at this time. They were manned by twenty preachers who were oftentimes compelled to travel several hundred miles in making one round of the circuit. The most important step taken at this session was relative to the giving of catechetical instruction.<sup>69</sup> This meant much for the development of the young people in the church and marked a forward movement. George Miller was also requested at this time

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67. History of Evng. Assoc. Yearly Vol. 1. P 109.

68. Ibid. P 111.

69. History of The Evangelical Assoc. P 111.



to prepare an enlarged form of the discipline.

The fifth conference<sup>70</sup> was held in 1812 at the home of Martin Driesbach in Union County. Membership was reported as 761. Five circuits and one mission were reported. This may seem to be a small development, yet when we consider that a circuit usually had from six to thirty preaching points it really covered considerable territory. At this session we find that a man who was to figure much in the development of the western church was licensed. This was Frederick Schauer who was one of the first missionaries to Ohio.

At the sixth<sup>71</sup> conference held at Buffalo valley, it was again decided to move farther out into the new country, and John Driesbach, Adam Hennig, David Jerlitz and John Klinefelter were ordered to form new circuits westward from the old ones. As a result of this we find Driesbach and Hennig in this year, pushed across the Alleghenies and forming three new classes, one in Glades, one in Brothers Valley, and one in Conemaugh. Sixty members were received at these places. The other two men went into Huntingdon and Bedford counties and formed several new classes. These classes formed the nucleus of what afterwards became Center Circuit. John Driesbach was directed to visit the various circuits in the east and to help in the special meetings.

The next conference<sup>72</sup> held in 1814 at the home of Martin Driesbach at Buffalo, marked the beginning of the Presiding Eldership in the Evangelical Association. John Driesbach, who was the most able man of his day was elected to this responsible position. His

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70. History of The Evangelical Association P 111.

71. Ibid. P 117.

72. Ibid. P 118.

district was the entire church and covered an area 300 miles long and 100 miles wide. He travelled over this district on horseback four times a year.<sup>73</sup> The roads were oftentimes deep and not well defined. Homes were far apart and it was no uncommon thing for the presiding elder to sleep in a room where he could see the stars through the roof. Sometimes they were also compelled to face bitter persecution in new neighborhoods.

By this time there were over a thousand members in the little church. The interim<sup>74</sup> between conference sessions had been one of remarkable progress; about 90 members had been gained. The work became so extensive that at the session of conference held at the home of Jacob Klinefelter in York county, 1815, it was thought best to divide it into two districts and elect two presiding elders. Henry Neibel was elected to the presiding eldership and stationed on what was called the Salem District. Driesbach's district was called the Caanan district. This year proved to be one of the most prosperous. During the year the membership was brought up to 1401.<sup>75</sup>

By this time the little denomination was firmly established in Pennsylvania. The work of the converted Albright had counted and the fruit was evident in the homes of the converted Pennsylvania Germans. The organization was not elaborate. The preachers had often been men of little learning. Their sermons would hardly appeal to the present generation, yet, wherever they had gone they had left a deep imprint. Religious services were changed in char-

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73. Evangelical Annals. P222 Vol. 1.

74. History of The Evangelical Association, Vol. 1 } Yeakel

75. Ibid. P 133  
P 134 }

acter from the formal worship to a living service. In many communities the practice of worship in the morning and drunkenness in the afternoon was looked on as absolutely wrong. There is little doubt that the preaching of these men had awakened the conscience of many, and that higher moral standards prevailed where they had labored. As individual standards became higher, the community life and politics would naturally take on a different aspect.

## CHAPTER IV.

## The Westward Movement. (1)

## To the Mississippi.

By the time the westward movement was at its height, the Evangelical Association was well enough established to take its place as an active factor in the development of the country. The old circuit riders were not slow to see the opportunity that lay before them and to go into the newly settled territories and establish churches, for the German people. It is only to be regretted that they did not have a little more foresight and work in both languages, for had they done so it is quite likely that the Evangelical Association not only would have been a much larger church, but scores of people that were not given church privileges might have profited.

This westward movement made the ninth conference session<sup>76</sup> held in 1816 at the home of Abraham Eyer near Dry Valley in Union county one of the most important in the history of the church. Already the Germans were migrating from Pennsylvania to Ohio. Two daughters of Eyer had gone with their husbands into the Ohio region in 1806<sup>77</sup> and in 1810 Martin Driesbach, another son-in-law had emigrated to Ohio. These people had been converted under the labors of Albright and wanted the church extended to take care of them. Others had also gone to Ohio from different parts of Pennsylvania. Naturally the question of sending a missionary to Ohio came up at this time and after a full discussion<sup>78</sup> it was decided to send two men to this new territory. The men chosen were Adam Hennig and Frederick

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76. History of the Evangelical Association, Vessels, P 136.

77. Evangelical Annual 1837.

78. Ibid P 136.

Schauer. Hennig was directed to work in the eastern portion of the state and Schauer was to push on west into the interior.<sup>79</sup>

Hennig, obedient to orders to work in the eastern<sup>80</sup> of the state, entered the state near New Philadelphia. Here he came unexpectedly on a family of Germans who had arrived from Pennsylvania only two weeks before. An appointment was made for him and that evening according to his own statement he preached to a number of orderly and attentive people.<sup>81</sup>

He determinēd to make this the base of operations and accordingly pushed out to Wooster and Mansfield and then turning, went to Canton and New Lisbon, and then back to New Philadelphia. The circuit that he established in this tour was 400 miles in length, with 30 to 40 appointments, and took in parts of Wayne, Stark, Columbia, Richland and Tuscarawas counties.<sup>82</sup> The country was new and unsettled. There were few well defined roads. Often the only roads were the Indian trails. Bridges were few and far between and often they were poorly constructed affairs. People had little for themselves, yet Hennig said he always found open doors and open hearts.<sup>83</sup> He found old Pennsylvania Evangelicals in almost every community.

In the fall of the same year that he went to Ohio, he began to organize the people at the various appointments into classes.<sup>84</sup> Although the work started near New Philadelphia the center soon changed to Canton and when the circuit was named, it took the name of the Canton circuit. While Hennig had been busy in the eastern

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79. Evangelical Annals P 137      80. Hist. Evan. As. Soc. Orwig P 85.

80. Ibid.      P 137.      84. Ibid.      P 85.

81. Flashlights of Evan. Hist. P 14.

82. Evangelical Annals P 137,  
and following chapter.

part of Ohio, Schauer<sup>85</sup> had been pushing into the interior. In the spring of 1816 he went into the Scioto valley. The first appointment mentioned by the historians is in a settlement of Pennsylvania Germans about twelve miles northwest of Lancaster. This was the place where the Hoy brothers, sons-in-law of Abraham Eyer lived. Daniel Hoy's home was the first preaching place in the Scioto valley, and it was here that the first class was formed in 1817. Twenty miles east of this settlement was a settlement of York county Pennsylvania Germans. When the news of Schauer's arrival spread to this settlement they at once invited him to come and preach in their community. He extended the work into Franklin, Ross and Pickaway counties.

Schauer left the church in the fall for some reason, but his visits through the various counties had resulted in establishing a work that afterwards became very strong. Prayer meetings were established and kept up, and the next year John and Adam Klinefelter were sent to this region. They succeeded in building up a good work through Ohio.<sup>86</sup>

This emigration was at first confined chiefly to scattering families, or at most to families that were related but shortly after 1820 this changed, and whole communities were transferred to the new country where land was cheap and plentiful. One of the first communities to emigrate in a body was the Thomas class west of Decatur township, Mifflin county, Pennsylvania. This was the oldest class west of the Susquehanna, and was thoroughly Evangelical. They emigrated in two companies, the first going in the early twenties and the rest about 1830. Part of them settled near

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85. Evangelical Annals P 142ff.

86. Ibid.

P 140.

Flat Rock in Seneca County and most of the others settled near Wooster in Wayne County.<sup>87</sup>

That the Evangelicals were active in the settlement of this territory is shown by the fact that some of the oldest towns in the state were named after them. Among these towns are Betzville named after John Betz, and Rowsburg, named after John Row.<sup>88</sup>

Sandusky circuit was formed in 1827 and assigned to Adam Klinefelter. It consisted of four or five counties and was a rough wild territory. When Jacob Saylor had gone there in the fall of 1826, he had found the men clearing the land and burning the brush. It had just been purchased from the Indians and settlers were coming in by the hundred. Saylor seems to have been the first missionary in the region, for they told him that they had not heard a sermon for six years, and they would work no more until they heard him preach.<sup>89</sup> Eleven years had passed since the first missionaries were sent to the Ohio territory. Yet there were three great circuits firmly established in the state, and the Evangelicals were pouring in by the hundreds.

ILLINOIS: The German has long been noted for seeking the best land in the country, so it is not to be wondered that when reports of the rich prairies of Illinois were brought east that they turned their eyes westward where they needed only to break out the land. Foremost of the Evangelicals in this movement was Daniel Stanger.

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87. Flashlights of Evangelical History. P 76.

88. Ibid. P 75.

89. Evangelical Annals. P 149.

In 1834 he had left his old home in Warren County, Pennsylvania, and gone to Illinois. He settled near DesPlaines where he secured a fine farm and erected a substantial house. He kept in correspondence with his Warren friends, and in 1836 J. G. Escher, J. Arnold and Jacob Kriehnbill and another young man whose name is not given joined him.<sup>90</sup> Their glowing description of the rich country resulted in a general emigration from the vicinity of Warren in the spring of 1837. Nearly all these people were members of the Evangelical Association. They did not all settle in the vicinity of DesPlaines, but pushed on still farther. One company went down to Naperville and the third went out to the Rock River in Henry county, and settled near Geneseo. There was no preacher in the company so they at once organized themselves into classes. In 1830 John Butz had gone to Mount Carmel and when the revival at Cedar Creek Valley in Lehigh county, Pennsylvania took place he had returned there, and with his entire family was converted. In the spring of 1837 they returned to Illinois and evidently organized a class, for he speaks in the Christliche Botschafter, June 21, 1837 of prayer meetings at which two persons were converted.

The first preacher of the denomination to visit Illinois was Jacob Boas. He was travelling the Miami Circuit in 1837 when he received orders from Henry Mielbel who was then Presiding Elder to visit Illinois. The way was a difficult one as well as a very long one, and he found plenty of hindrances in making the journey. On June 21 he had received his orders to do to Illinois and on July 23 he landed in Chicago which was a small town at that time. He spent the day in visiting friends in the town and then the next day resumed his journey to DesPlaines. An appointment was made for

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90. Evangelical Annals p 187.



him at the home of Daniel Stanger and the third day after his arrival he preached to a good audience. This was the first German sermon in what is now the Illinois Conference. From here he went to Naperville and preached to the class there. No record of a visit to the classes on the Rock River and Mount Carmel is given. In September a quarterly meeting was held and Boas ratified their previous organization into classes. At Christmas he returned to Ohio. In a letter published in the Christliche Botschafter, the latter part of 1837 Boas described the conditions in Illinois. There were many Germans in the state and very few German preachers. The Germans were, he said, like sheep without a shepherd.<sup>91</sup>

The following spring Peter West was assigned to Illinois, but one of the men in Ohio was unable to travel on his circuit, so Wiest was compelled to travel in Ohio until September and then he came and took charge of the field as the first regular pastor.<sup>92</sup>

In 1839 Lewis Einsel began to preach in Chicago. The same year he dedicated the first church of the Evangelical Association at DesPlaines. It was a small log structure yet it was sufficient for the needs of the people who cared little for appearances.<sup>93</sup>

One of the leaders of the westward movement in the Evangelical Association was John Seybert who became bishop in 1839. Just before he was elected to this important office he held a quarterly meeting in Center County, Pennsylvania, and during this meeting which perhaps lasted for several days, he spoke on the advantages and desirability of Illinois as a place for emigrants. As a result of this a large number of the people in the community deter-

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91. History of Evangelical Association, Orwig P 218

92. Evangelical Annals. P 159.

93. Ibid.

P 161

mined to move to Illinois. They informed Seybert of their intention and he suggested that they organize as a class before they went west. His suggestion was followed and Conrad Epply was elected class leader and William Weirick exhorter. This company set out in covered wagons in April, 1839, and made the tiresome journey to Cedarville Stephenson county.<sup>94</sup> In 1839 Presiding Elder J. G. Zinser directed John Lutz to visit Illinois and judging from a report dated March 28, 1840, which is quoted by A. Stapleton from the Christliche Botschafter the particular point he had in view was Cedarville. He travelled into several of the Illinois counties, also into Wisconsin. He corroborated the statements made two years before by Boas with regard to the Germans in Illinois and also Wisconsin. He travelled in Illinois and Wisconsin until May, 1840 and then he and Einsel started east to the session of the Ohio Conference.<sup>95</sup>

The work was divided into two parts that year. Eastern Illinois was called Illinois circuit, and the places in the western part and Wisconsin were called Illinois mission. Isaac Hoffer and Daniel Kern were sent to the circuit and John Lutz was again sent to Illinois Mission. J. G. Zinser visited the West for the first time that year. This was the first time a presiding elder had visited them.<sup>96</sup>

In 1841 Bishop Seybert<sup>97</sup> who was responsible for the emigration of these people to Illinois visited Illinois. He held a camp meeting on the land of Jacob Esher, two miles southeast of Wheeling in Cook County. This was the old DesPlaines Class. From here

94. Evangelical Annals. P 119

97. Life of Bishop Seybert P 232 ff.

95. Ibid. P 121

See also Orris, Hist. of Penn. Jan. .

96. Evangelical Annals P 121

he went to Naperville and then on to Cedarville. In 1842 Mount Carmel circuit was organized and assigned to Christian Augestein. Illinois Mission was changed to Rock River circuit and assigned to Levi Hess and Daniel Kern.<sup>98</sup> In 1841 Illinois circuit<sup>99</sup> had been changed to Des Plaines circuit. This year it was assigned to Fred Wahl and G. A. Blank.

In 1843<sup>100</sup> the Illinois region was constituted the fifth district of the Ohio conference. There were four appointments, viz. Des Plaines circuit served by Christian Kopp; Rock River circuit served by Levi Hess and J. G. Miller; Chicago Mission, served by Fred Wahl; and Milwaukee mission, served by Mathias Hauert. Samuel Baumgartner was the presiding elder. He moved that year to Des Plaines. This proved to be a successful year in Illinois. The second Evangelical church in the state was dedicated in Naperville and one was begun in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A beginning was also made in Freeport.

The next church was built in 1844 in Chicago, at the corner of Washington and Wabash Avenues. This was the first German Protestant church in the city.<sup>101</sup> This year two new missions were begun in Illinois. One was at Galena, on the Mississippi, and the other at Peoria.

At the general conference session<sup>102</sup> held in Greensburg, Ohio in 1843, it was decided that Illinois should be organized as a separate conference. In harmony with this action the Illinois men met at

98. Evangelical Annals P 162

99. Ibid. P 161.

100. Ibid. P 162

101. Ibid. P 163

102. Origin History of Evangelical United Brethren Church  
Evangelical Annals P 167

the next session of the Ohio conference held in Ashland, May 14, 1844 and organized the Illinois Conference.<sup>103</sup> This territory which extended over large portions of Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin covered an area of approximately 200,000 square miles, was divided into two districts. The Eastern one was called Indiana district and was presided over by A. B. Sheffer. The other was called the Illinois district, and was presided over by S. Baumgartner. From the first Bishop Seybert was very enthusiastic in pushing out the work in the pioneer regions. He gave so much time and attention to the West that the Eastern people were wont to accuse him of partiality to the West.<sup>104</sup> This was a very successful year in Illinois. A mission was established in Racine, Wisconsin by M. Hauert, and one in Iowa by J. G. Miller.<sup>105</sup> This seems to be the first systematic effort in Iowa, although Bishop Spreng, in his life of Seybert states, that in 1841 John Hoffert was pushing across the Mississippi into Iowa.<sup>106</sup>

1845 found a shortage of ministers in the Illinois conference, but in spite of this difficulty they were gradually pushing west. Dubuque circuit in Iowa was separated from Galena Mission and put in charge of M. Hauert and another Mission called the Winnebago, Wisconsin Mission was assigned to J. G. Miller.<sup>107</sup>

Only eight years had elapsed since Jacob Boas first came to Illinois, yet Illinois conference was by this time firmly established. There were eighteen itinerant ministers in the field all the time. The leading communities in Illinois, Wisconsin and Eastern

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103. Evan. Annals P 270, 275.

107. Evangelical Annals P 276.

104. Life of Seybert P 134

105. Orwig, Hist. of Evan. Assoc. P 391  
Evan. Annals, Vol. 1 P 274.

106. Life of Seybert P 231

Iowa had been entered.

INDIANA:<sup>108</sup> The church in Indiana was in point of years, older than in Illinois. The work here was begun in 1835 when Rev. J. G. Zinser held a general meeting at Abbingdon in the month of October. There were at that time three members of the church in the state. In 1836 another general meeting was held and from that time it was served as a regular charge. At first it was served in connection with the Miami circuit. Later it became a separate charge. A few years after the establishment of the mission at Germantown appointments were taken up at Mt. Carmel and Dubois in the southwest part of the state. In 1841 the work in Indiana was divided and the central part was called Wayne circuit. The eastern part was called Whitewater circuit. In 1843 the work in Indiana with Mt. Carmel had been established as the Indiana district of the Illinois Conference in 1853.<sup>109</sup>

The work in Indiana was slow in growth for two reasons:

1. The French Catholics had scattered along the Ohio valley and from here had gone into many other parts of the state. The missionaries spoke German and English and the language in these French communities was exclusively French.

2. The Westward-bound pioneer was not inclined to stop in his journey until he reached the fertile plains of Illinois.

MICHIGAN:<sup>110</sup> The early work in Michigan was established by S. Altimos who moved to Monroe county in 1838. His work was more in the nature of pioneer mission work and not for the purpose of forming a definite organization. The same conditions were found

108. Evangelical Annals P 163.

109. Ibid. P 163

110. Ibid. pp 325 and 326.

here that existed in Indiana and they resulted in a very slow growth of the church for a number of years. No conference was organized here until 1865.

WISCONSIN<sup>111</sup> The establishing of the church in Wisconsin was almost simultaneous with its establishment in Illinois. The work in Milwaukee and vicinity is the oldest in the state. It was established by John Lutz in 1840. Other points were taken up and gradually it assumed proportions great enough to warrant the formation of a separate conference. This was done in 1857. The Wisconsin men were active in the missionary efforts in Minnesota. The first to enter Minnesota were men from the Wisconsin conference.

The pioneers of Wisconsin found plenty of opposition. Bishop Seybert<sup>112</sup> in speaking of conditions there says they were divided into three parties, viz. the center of Rationalists, and infidels, a wing of Popularity Christians, and another wing of superstitious bigots. He says of their work, "As against the truth, these all blow through one horn and unitedly go into the field against the servants of God."

Many of the early Evangelicals in Wisconsin were Swiss people. They were very set in their notions and usually do what they say. On one occasion the Swiss congregation at Sauk decided to dismiss their preacher. Samuel Baumgartner who was not afraid of them was to preach the last sermon. He took for his text Micah 2:11 and then preached a sermon that touched the peculiar conditions as they existed there and the result was that they decided to keep their preacher.<sup>113</sup> This is only one of the many difficulties of

111. Evangelical Annals. pp 161, 218.

112. Biography of Seybert.

113. Yeckel, History of Evan. Assoc. Vol. 2.

The conditions referred to are...

this kind that the itinerant in Wisconsin was compelled to face. They were brave and unafraid and finally built up a strong constituency which has stood through many years.

The church through the central states had a remarkable growth. When it is remembered that Illinois was for the most part a wild country when the first Evangelicals settled at Des Plaines, the growth of the church is the more remarkable. But its growth is not more remarkable than the good it did among the German speaking people. The itinerant had gone into new communities in the face of the fiercest opposition and by his plain and fearless preaching established his church and became a leader in the community. In other communities there was little or no opposition. Bishop Spreng in speaking of the campmeeting at Des Plaines in the Biography of Seybert remarks that the order was so good that no police were needed. The Evangelical Association was the first German protestant church except the Lutherans to enter and establish a church; in some they were ahead of the Lutherans and for years were the only church in the community. In the vicinity of Elgin, Washington, East Peoria, Cedarville and Barrington they were pioneers and are today represented by strong churches in these communities.

In Ohio the same thing is true. Some of the older men who were pioneers in the church have made the statement that the only thing that hindered a more rapid growth was the failure to introduce the English language. Especially is this true of Illinois. The introduction of the English was opposed very much by the older German men. The presiding elders, as a rule, were men who could use both languages but unless forced to it they would never preach English. Oftentimes when a minister would introduce English in

the Sunday school and preaching service so that he might hold the young people the older ones would send work to conference that an entirely German man was wanted. This battle over the language question was oftentimes very bitter. It was no uncommon thing to have a neighborhood divided on the question. Sometimes it even divided families. Among the pioneer advocates of the introduction of English were J. W. Mohr and D. B. Myers who oftentimes saw their work ruined by some hard headed German Presiding Elder who cared more for his native tongue than he did for the general good of the church. Mohr<sup>114</sup> has made the statement that had the itinerant preacher of the Evangelical Association accommodated himself to the need of the people and taken the people as they came to them regardless of language instead of hunting out the Germans and leaving the rest to be cared for by some one else or not at all, the church today would be a much stronger body than it is. At the same time communities would have been reached that had no regular services until years after this.

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114. Rev. Mohr has often made this statement to me, at his home 312 Herkmer St., Joliet, Ill. I think he is correct in his view. The leading members of some of the large churches in Joliet are from old Evangelical families, and their excuse for a change when they changed 30 years and some 40 years ago was that they wanted the English preaching and the older people would not have it. Mohr introduced English in several communities and then was moved. Among them are Sterling and Geneseo.



## CHAPTER V.

## The Westward Movement. (2)

## West of the Mississippi.

The American has always been a restless person. Especially was this true during the nineteenth century. His eyes were constantly turned westward looking for the better things of the land. When we stop to consider that during the first half of the century there was comparatively little manufacturing, we do not wonder at it. The average American tilled the soil for a living. Not many things were required. The tools needed were a stirring plow, a wagon, a harrow, a single shovel cultivator, and a cradle. Along with these went the faithful axe and rifle. The axe furnished the means of constructing the house. The wild beasts furnished meat for the table and with the plow and other tools, the crops were planted, cultivated and harvested. A glance at the rocks of the eastern country is a sufficient explanation of the desire to get to the fertile plains of the Mississippi Valley. In not a few instances whole communities would emigrate to the New country. Among these were colonies of Evangelicals who sometimes would organize themselves into classes before leaving the home "Back east" as they were accustomed to call Pennsylvania which was the home of the early Evangelicals.

The leaders of the church were not hesitant about recommending the new territory as being a desirable place to settle. Seybert and Long both were profuse in their praises of the west and often advised emigration to the newer territory.<sup>115</sup>

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115. Bishop Seybert advised the class which went from Pennsylvania to Cedarville to emigrate. They organized before leaving Pennsylvania.

Wherever the Pennsylvania Germans went the circuit rider of the Evangelical Association went. Jacob Boas had followed them to Illinois and when it was learned that the Germans had settled in Iowa it was the most natural thing in the world for the itinerant to cross the Mississippi and establish the flag of the Evangelical Association on Iowa soil.

To John Hoffer<sup>116</sup> of the Stephenson county colony, belongs the honor of being the first minister of the denomination in Iowa. As early as 1841 Seybert reports him as having pushed across the river into Iowa. His work was evidently only occasional missionary efforts for they did not result in any organization.

The first mention we have of anything permanent is in 1844 when J. G. Miller went across the river from Galena and established a mission in the vicinity of Dubuque.<sup>117</sup> This was the real beginning of the Evangelical Association in Iowa. The state had not been admitted to the Union. Very few churches of any kind were to be found in the state. The settlements were scattered and families were long distance apart. Dubuque was one of the oldest settlements in the state. There were many Germans in the community so it was a good place to locate a new mission. The next year it was constituted a separate mission<sup>118</sup> and M. Hauert was sent as Missionary and he succeeded in spreading the work enough to warrant the change in name from Dubuque to Iowa Mission. J. J. Esher served as missionary during the years of 1846 and 1847 and then Conrad Epply served for a year. The next year it is recorded that

116. Life of Seybert. P 236

117. Evangelical Annals P 274

118. Ibid P 274

it was left "To be supplied."<sup>119</sup> No record of the work from this until 1852 is given by any of the historians of the church but it is quite likely that the work was supplied later in the year, for later records show evidences of work having been carried on all the time.

A great many of the German people of Iowa came from Pennsylvania, and as in Illinois they usually settled in colonies. One of the earliest of these colonies was a party from Dauphin county which emigrated to Grandview<sup>120</sup> in Louisa county in 1852. This was another of the special colonies in which Seybert was interested and he had advised them to organize a class and he promised to send them a preacher. They organized in September by electing George Gipple class leader and J. Martin Exhorter. To this class belongs the honor of erecting the first church of the denomination in Iowa. They have had a remarkable record for sending out ministers and ministers' wives.

By 1854 the work in Iowa had become so extensive that it was deemed best to separate it into two parts. The territory adjacent to Dubuque was called Dubuque Mission and the rest of it was called Cedar River circuit.<sup>121</sup> Until 1856 these points had belonged to the Peoria district of the Illinois conference, but when the Freeport<sup>122</sup> district was organized in 1856 these points were attached to it. At that time there were three appointments, in the state. It is

119. This expression is used in the conference when for any reason a point is not supplied at the conference session. Like it was supplied later.

120. Evangelical Anecdotes P 335

121. Ibid. P 307.

122. Ibid. P 316.

quite probable that each of these had at least half a dozen preaching places and extended over three or four counties, for the Pioneer preacher was never content to sit down in one place and keep quiet but he was constantly hunting for new preaching places. "New preaching places," and "Extend the borders," were common terms in those days.

In 1857 it was decided to constitute the appointments in Iowa into a separate presiding elder district. W. Kolb had the honor of being the first Presiding Elder in the state. Six other men were assigned to Iowa to serve the four charges that now existed. Among those assigned to Iowa that year were R. Dubs and J. W. Mohr, both young men who had been licensed the year before. They served the "Junior" preachers that year. Dubs was on the Maquoketa circuit with Henry Schelp. Mohr was sent with J. W. Schaffle to the Cedar River Circuit.<sup>123</sup>

This year was a trying one for the pioneers. The season was wet and the grain rotted in the shock before it could be threshed. To make matters worse the "Wildcat" banks had sprung up and flooded the market with their worthless paper. There was no silver or gold in Iowa, in fact there were no banks in Iowa. Mohr said that when he went to Iowa he had \$22 in Central Rhode Island paper currency, which he found was worthless in Iowa. Had the people not been in a mood to receive the pioneer preachers it would have been very hard on them, but in Iowa as in the far West today, people were willing to share what they had with the stranger.

Mohr spent four years in Iowa. With his colleague he preached in many points which, up to that time, had been without preaching

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<sup>123</sup>. Evangelical Annual, p. 210.

He found an entrance into the territory about Waterloo. In Independence he bought a lot and opened the way for a church to be built. Other preaching places were Belle Plaine, Toledo, Webster, Marshalltown. It was, "hard work," is Mohr's comment on the work. Often he was compelled to ford rivers that were swollen by the rains. There was only one railroad in the state and that terminated at Iowa City. The usual mode of travel was by buggy.<sup>124</sup> When on the North Bend, the main appointments were 45 miles apart. Generally the ministers were well received, but occasionally some one would attempt to run them out of the community.

Dubs stayed on the Maquoketa circuit one year and then was sent to Marion circuit. To him belongs the credit of establishing much of the work in the vicinity of Cedar Rapids and Marion; for a number of years the Evangelical Association was the only church represented in the vicinity of Alburnette and Center Point. In 1858 he built a church in Independence.<sup>125</sup> While they had been laboring in the northeastern part of Iowa, others had been busy in the south part of the state. A church, the first in Iowa, had been dedicated at Grandview in 1857 and the missionary activities had broadened out until at the conference in 1858 it was decided to establish missions at Des Moines, Muscatine and in eastern Nebraska.<sup>126</sup>

✓ While the Illinois conference had been pushing west, the Wisconsin conference had also crossed the river into Minnesota and established missions. At the session of the Illinois conference

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124. These incidents were related to me by Rev. Mohr at his home in Joliet in the spring of 1914.

125. Article by L. Dubs in Evangelical Vol. 17, No. 18.

126. Conference records in Evangelical Annals, I 211.

held in 1856 Wisconsin conference was organized. At the same session of the Illinois conference it was decided to send a missionary to Minnesota, and the sum of \$131.50 was subscribed by the ministers on the conference floor for that purpose.<sup>127</sup> A. Tarnutzer was the man chosen to go, and in November he went to Winona at which point he began his work. In 1859 the Minnesota district was formed.

At the general conference held in Naperville in 1859 it was decided to form the Minnesota district of the Wisconsin conference and the Iowa district of the Illinois conference into the Iowa conference. As far as possible this was done at the next session of the Illinois conference held at Plainfield in 1860. The work was divided into two districts, viz. the Iowa district and the Kansas district. The remainder of the appointments in Iowa constituted the Iowa district.<sup>128</sup> The pioneers had by this time reached Kansas and the struggle between slavery and free states to gain possession of additional territory was causing a horde of emigrants from the eastern and central states to settle in Kansas.

The conference at Plainfield in 1860 sent R. Dubs into the midst of this seething mass, to establish a mission at Humbolt, Kansas. The Illinois conference was strongly Union as was also the Iowa, of which the Kansas work was to be a part, so it is possible that one of the ideas in sending a missionary there was to in a peaceful way attract anti-slavery emigrants and thus save the state to the Anti-slavery element. The journey was a hard one, as it had to be made entirely by buggy. Dubs says, "No minister had been here before; I was the farthest at the front at this time."

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<sup>127</sup>. Conference records in *Evangelical Annals*, P 221.

<sup>128</sup>. *Ibid.* pp. 226, 227.

To make matters worse, Kansas was visited by one of the drouths that are frequent there even now. They had nothing for themselves, let alone a preacher. But the preacher proved one of the blessings to the community at that time, for he sent to the members of the Evangelical Association in the older and more fortunate states a statement of the conditions, and asked help for Kansas. They responded readily and he distributed the supplies without regard to nationality or church relationship. This opened the way for him and when Mr. Thurston offered to furnish and saw the lumber needed for a church if someone would cut the trees, the people who had no work cut the timber and furnished the labor to build the first church in Humboldt. The town council gave twenty-four lots for the location. This was one of the first churches in Kansas of any denomination, and the first of the Evangelical Association.<sup>129</sup>

While Dubs had been laboring at Humboldt, Phillip Porr had been itinerating over Browns, Jackson, Pottowattamie and Nemaha counties. He had seven regular preaching places in these counties. Christian Barner was at Franklin mission and M. J. Miller at Leavenworth. These men, like Dubs, had proved their usefulness in the community by securing aid from the church in the east.<sup>130</sup>

The first session of the Iowa conference was held at Grandview in 1861. In order to reach this, the men from Kansas had to go across the state of Missouri by rail to Hannibal and then up the river by steamboat to Muscatine and then across the country by team to Grandview. The men from Minnesota came down the river and then

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<sup>129</sup>. Related by Dubs in "The Evangelical" Vol. 27, No. 13.

<sup>130</sup>. Evangelical, Vol. 27, No. 13.

were taken across the country to Grandview by team. Bishop Orwig was the presiding elder and Jacob Keiper was the secretary of the conference. The Minnesota men were put into a district by themselves and Israel Kuter was elected Presiding Elder of that district.<sup>130</sup>

The next two years were full of happenings in the west. The Civil War was just beginning and Kansas was rent by two factions. The little town of Humboldt, which Dubs had helped to save from starvation in 1860 was burned by the Slavery element in 1861 and the people were again rendered almost destitute. The church built the year before was saved from the flames.<sup>131</sup> The first martyrs of the Evangelical Church fell in the dreadful massacre by the Sioux Indians at New Ulm and Fort Ridgely, Minnesota in 1862. About a hundred of the Evangelical Association were slain. Among them were Rev. Lewis Seeder and Rev. August Nerenz.<sup>132</sup> H. Kleinorge and Rev. Uber had been laboring in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska.

A small congregation had been gathered at Council Bluffs and the preaching places were scattered from Council Bluffs to the Dakota line. The presiding elder in describing this circuit said it was almost endless. This circuit belonged to the Kansas district. It took the presiding elder eight days to make the trip from his home in Kansas.<sup>133</sup> He was compelled to pass through several Indian reservations. It was no uncommon thing for the presiding elder and preachers to spend nights in the open prairie

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131. Yeakel, History of Evangelical Association Vol. II, P 100.

132. Flashlights of Evangelical History, P 101.

133. Evangelical Annals, P 204.



with no food except what they could carry with them. The presiding elder, in his report, significantly remarks that they often had a better time of it than many had in their hot cabins with fleas and bugs for companions.

The first German camp meeting in Kansas was held by the Evan-association in 1861 at Holton. There were about a hundred persons at the services which was good, considering the fact that the settlements were few and much scattered.<sup>134</sup> It was not uncommon to find a stretch of twenty miles between houses.

1863 marked the close of the quadrennium. There were now thirty-six ministers west of the Mississippi; fifteen of these were in Minnesota. The massacre at New Ulm had not daunted the preachers. Others went in and took the place of Seedorf and Nerenz. Kansas now had seven charges so it is apparent that the missionaries had been busy extending the borders of the church.<sup>135</sup>

At this session of the general conference, Kansas district was separated from the Iowa conference and constituted a separate conference. They met with the Iowa conference in 1864 and then in 1865 they met as a separate conference. There were seven charges and eight preachers in the conference. The Iowa conference was re-distributed into three districts. Their territory now included all the former territory except Kansas. They kept pushing out the frontier lines and filling in the more settled portions of all these states until by the close of the quadrennium they had more members than they had before Kansas conference was formed. The men in Minnesota were anxious to have a separate con-

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134. Evangelical Annals P 857.

135. Ibid. See conference record sections for year 1871.

ference, so in 1867 a tentative organization was effected at the session of the Iowa conference. This step was approved by the General conference in 1868. It was divided into two districts.

Iowa conference was again redistributed into three districts. The Iowa conference now gave more time and attention to Nebraska. More missions were established there and special efforts were made to reach the people of that territory. In 1860 a new district was organized by them in Nebraska. It was called the Nebraska district. They also went into the northern and western part of Iowa and established enough missions there to warrant the formation of a fifth district in 1874.<sup>136</sup> The English had begun to come into the Iowa conference in its early stages. J. W. Mohr had preached English in the 'fifties' and others had followed his footsteps. As a result there were many English appointments in the Iowa conference. The English people wanted a separate organization so in 1875 a resolution asking the division of the Iowa conference was passed.

When a general conference met they granted the request and the Des Moines conference was organized.<sup>137</sup> This is an important occurrence for it marks the beginning of exclusively English conferences in the Evangelical Association.

Permission to form the Nebraska district into a separate conference within four years was granted provided two-thirds of the members of the Iowa conference voted favorably. Now began a period of expansion on the part of both the conferences in Iowa that was to result in a widespread establishment of the church. Hitherto the language question had been a hindrance in entering many com-

136. Evangelical Annals, 3:513.

For conference record session for year 1874.

137. Evangelical Annals 3:73.

munities. The German with his characteristic love for the German language was often a hindrance to the establishment of English. Naturally the Germans would insist that the bulk of the missionary money go to the German churches and that they evangelize the Germans. This was true as late as 1906 when Wm. Jonas of the northwestern conference of the United Evangelical Church<sup>138</sup> stated on the conference floor at LeMars, Iowa that the mission of the Northwest conference was to the Germans in the Northwest.

When the Des Moines conference was organized as a separate body they were free to go to the English speaking people and they did established English missions in Nebraska. The Afton district which was organized in 1878 extended into Nebraska. Presiding Elder E. E. Mell, in an article to the Evangelical Messenger of February 12, 1880 says, "My district extends nearly six hundred miles." Alma and Hastings, Nebraska, both points west of central Nebraska, were on his district. The Alma mission extended into Kansas. Rev. Pettit, who served Alma mission in 1880 reported a meeting in Phillips county, Kansas. This was the first meeting held in the community. He aptly remarks that the ball room had been their chief amusement before this. One of the features of the report which he gave in the Evangelical Messenger of Feb. 25, 1880 was the account of a dance given near the hall where the meeting was held, which was given for the express purpose of breaking up the meeting. In 1880 the appointments which the Iowa conference had in Nebraska were formed into the Nebraska conference. The Des Moines conference still had the English appointments but the next

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138. An outgrowth of the Evangelical Association, organized 1894.

year these were organized into the Platte River conference. The Des Moines gave up the English appointments. The Platte River conference was the second exclusively English conference in the Church.<sup>139</sup>

The men in Minnesota had not been idle. While the Iowa men had been making their way to the western part of Nebraska and Kansas they had been busy in missionary efforts in Dakota. This was a wild territory for years afterward, yet they seem to have been fairly successful for a conference was formed in the Dakotas in 1884.<sup>140</sup>

Thus ended the formation of new conferences by the church as a whole in the region between the Mississippi and the Rocky mountains. But it did not end missionary work. Many communities were still untouched. Some of them were infidel nests. B. H. Neibel presnet secretary of the board of missions of the United Evangelical church was then a young itènerant in the Des Moines conference. He describes the entering of one of these communities south of Story City, Iowa. Most all of the people had been reared in infidel homes; none of them professed to believe anything. The Sabbath was spent in horse-racing, ball playing, gambling, and drinking. The young folks seemed to be outstripping their elders in lawlessness and wickedness. At length it became too bad for them and one man, the father of several children, turned to Neibel and asked him to come to the schoolhouse and conduct services. Neible, like his grandfather and father, was ready to face any kind

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139. *Evangelical Incarn.* pp 420, 423.

140. *Ibid.* p 452

of a problem, and accepted the invitation. The first Sunday was rainy and only the man who had given the invitation appeared, but Neibel was not daunted by the smallness of his congregation but went ahead and preached. The man's story of Neibel's bravery in preaching to him alone was a first class advertisement and in two weeks the house was full. It was taken up as a regular appointment and during the succeeding months a revival meeting was held and a class formed.<sup>141</sup>

Rev. G. S. Smith, of Freeport, Illinois, was one of the pioneers in southwestern Nebraska. He went to Imperial in 1888. In spite of hardships he pushed out into the new country and established a number of preaching places in the sparsely settled territory. His circuit required two weeks' time and driving 145 miles for one complete round. When he went to Imperial he found a house that would do to live in through the summer, but in the winter he was compelled to go to the home of a kind hearted farmer who had a comfortable sod house. The next conference granted \$50 for the erection of a parsonage. This with some collected from the people on the charge was enough to build a house about 18 feet square. Smith was instrumental in many of the pioneer Evangelical communities. The church has an enviable record for pioneer work in Nebraska. Many communities had no other church for a number of years. It was the pioneer church in most of the towns along the Black Hills division of the Union Pacific Railroad. At Dawson, Lomax, Lodi and Eddyville it was the first church, and in Callaway it was one of the first. In a distance of twenty-five miles from

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<sup>141</sup>. This incident was related to me by Rev. G. S. Neibel in March, 1911.

Callaway to Cozad no other church was found. Many of these country churches are still largely attended and the people prefer them to the churches in the towns.

In Nebraska the Evangelicals entered politics. In 1886 Newton Gore, a populist, and M. T. Maze, a republican, were candidates on their respective tickets for representative. Gore won out and then secured a place for Maze who was his brother-in-law, as chaplain in the House of Representatives. Both these men had been homesteaders from Indiana. Maze afterwards entered the active ministry and became one of the most active men in the church.<sup>142</sup>

While these men had been busy in the central states the pioneers had been moving on toward the Pacific. The advance guard had gone in '49 when the gold fever at its height in California. Others had followed and settled in various parts of California and Oregon. Among them were members of the Evangelical Association; and California had a mushroom growth. Cities sprung up in a week. Justice was meted out summarily and without fear or favor. It is little wonder that the Pennsylvania German soon longed for the old-fashioned preaching and sent home a petition for a preacher.

Illinois and Wisconsin were quick to see the need in the new territory and in 1862 they urged the establishment of a mission on the Pacific. The same year a petition came from San Francisco for a preacher. The war was at its height and money was scarce, so nothing was done until 1864, when C. F. Deinger, M. Guhl, and J. Croasman were sent to the coast by the Board of Missions. Deininger went to San Francisco, and Guhl to San Jose, while Croasman went north to Oregon. After two years the work in southern California

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142. The facts of the establishment of the church in these sections of Nebraska, as well as of other parts related to me by Rev.

was discontinued. The work in San Francisco and Oregon proved more successful and in 1866 churches were built in San Francisco and Salem, Oregon. In 1876 there were five missions and five preachers on the Pacific Coast. These were organized into the Pacific conference. After ten years it was formed into the California and Oregon conferences. The work on the Pacific did not make as rapid progress as had been made in the central states. There were less<sup>143</sup> than 1500 members on the coast in 1887. Oregon had nearly four-fifths of these. The cause for the slowness in California may, perhaps, be explained by the distrust with which the average German viewed anything but hard work. It will be remembered that the people who went settled Illinois and the central states were farmers, and they went to those states for the purpose of tilling the soil, while in California the attraction was gold. Gold was attractive to the German but he preferred to till the soil and trade his corn and wheat for it to risking his life and what he had to mine it.

The timber and farm lands of Oregon were more attractive to him and so he went there in preference to California.

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143. See conference records in the Evangelical Annals PP 418, 485, 447 and 508.  
Also see Yeabel, History of the Evangelical Association,  
Vol. 2, P 107.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Evangelical Association  
And Slavery.

An eloquent witness of the attitude of the Evangelical Association on the great moral question of Slavery and the constitutional question of Secession may be found in the number of Grand Army buttons to be seen in their congregations. Though they are growing fewer every year there are still a great many of them. This great question naturally caused some friction in the church, yet it was not as severe as it was in many of the larger churches. It did not cause a schism as it did in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. As a church the Evangelical Association was known as an anti slavery body. They had been prepared for the coming conflict by their leaders. Bishop Seybert is reported to have said that slavery would cause a rebellion of the slaveholding states and that the result would be the most terrible civil war that America had ever seen. He told the younger members of the church to prepare for it, for they would live to see it, but he would not. The Bishop's prediction proved true and the struggle came like a mighty thunderbolt. When the call came for volunteers the Pennsylvania Germans were among the first to go. Among them were many of the Evangelicals. Union Seminary<sup>144</sup> at New Berlin was forced to suspend because of the war. The men students of Greensburg Seminary also enlisted, in such numbers that the institution was crippled. The historians attribute the failure of this institution very largely to the war. The church papers as well as the

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144. See articles on Educational Institutions, Evangelical Intel



secular press were full of the horrors of war. Hardly a conference session met without passing many resolutions<sup>145</sup> upholding the administration.

Pennsylvania led in this work with a resolution passed in March 1862, by the East Pennsylvania Conference. Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana conferences followed the lead of the older conference. In 1863 more pro union resolutions were passed. Pittsburg conference<sup>146</sup> passed the resolutions and called on all the ministers of the church "To defend the Union by word and doctrine both in public and private." This conference also refused to supply the charges located in the state of Virginia which was then in a state of rebellion. This shows to a great extent the feeling among the ministers of the Evangelical Association. Some of the itinerants had already enlisted as volunteers and others followed in the succeeding years. When Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, the Ohio conference adopted a strong resolution supporting him in all his measures to sustain the government. The other conferences followed with their resolutions along the same line and in the General conference that assembled in Buffalo October 1, 1863, a committee of one delegate from each conference was appointed to express the sentiment of the conference on the leading questions of the day. The resolution passed recognized the hand of God in the movements of the day and endorsed the administration of Lincoln and called on the entire church to be faithful and obedient. One member of the committee brought in a min-

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145. See Conf. record section of Evangelical Annals.

146. Ibid. P 339

ority report which was anti-slavery in sentiment but somewhat milder than the first one and it ignored the Emancipation Proclamation altogether. This report was rejected by a vote of 62 against it and 4 in favor.<sup>147</sup> The conferences of 1864 again adopted the pro Union resolution.

During the period of the war the Botschafter and the Evangelical Messenger were full of communications from the camps and hospitals, written by the soldiers who were members of the Evangelical Association. A special section headed "Our Patriotic Dead" was maintained for the obituaries of the fallen heroes of the church. Six or eight names were always found there and after the severe battles the columns would be crowded.<sup>148</sup> Yeakel, who was a contemporary, estimates the fallen Evangelicals by the thousands.

The sentiments of the Evangelicals found expression in the poems of H. B. Hartzler, then a young man. Others not gifted in a poetic way expressed their sentiments from the pulpit. Both the Bishops were stanch Abolitionists. Bishop Seybert<sup>149</sup> after a tour south of Mason and Dixon's line expressed himself as happy to get away from the "Accursed ground." He asserted several times that he would not want to be in a slave state even if he were dead and he gave careful instructions to his brethren in the ministry that if it should happen to die in a slave state that they should carry his remains to a free state for burial. In politics Seybert was a Democrat and in his last years he held tenaciously to

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147. History of Evangelical Association Vol. 2, P 120.

148. Evangelicals Annals P 381.

149. Life of Seybert P 427.

the principles of the party. When he was charged by a minister with being affiliated with a party that upheld slavery he replied, "Slavery is of the devil and if I were called to it and the government would give me fifty thousand armed men, I would go into the south and root out this national evil teetotally." To his friend's surprised exclamation he replied, "Yes sir, a rod for the fool's back; hell for the devil's reward, and absolute destruction for slavery." The above shows that while the Bishop's heart was in the right place and his sentiments on the right side of the question, his estimate of the strength of slavery was like so many others; he did not conceive of its strength or he would never have dreamed of rooting it out with fifty thousand men.

Bishop Long was just as radical in his abolition sentiments as Bishop Seybert. He never missed an opportunity of condemning the traffic in slaves as absolutely wrong. R. Yeakel in his biography of Long has published many of his articles which originally appeared in the Botschafter in the German language. All of them are strongly abolition in character.<sup>150</sup>

When it came to the reconstruction period the church took the side of Congress and condemned President Johnson for obstructing the measures of Congress.<sup>151</sup> The church as a whole were staunch Lincoln men. The old soldiers have an devotion to him that is almost idolatry.

The fact that there was no division of the church on this question is due to the fact that the major part of the church was in the

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150. Biography of Bishop Long.

151. See Conf. record section of Evangelical Annals.

north. No doubt there were slave holders in Virginia but they were so much in the minority that it was useless for them to attempt to form a separate organization.

Here again is the characteristic of a distinctly American church. The larger churches which had been imported from other lands divided on the great national issue but the Evangelical Association, a product of American life stood firmly by the Government and never was there the slightest intimation of anything but loyalty to the Union as a church.

## CHAPTER VII.

## Educational Institutions and Education

Part I. The Evangelical Association.  
Attitude of the leaders

The leaders of the Evangelical association were German and what education they had was in the German language.

Albright was not a highly educated man yet he was a careful and a diligent student. He did not hesitate to use whatever helps were available in his study of the scripture. In working with the younger men he was careful to give them instruction in the proper dividing of the texts and he always urged them to be careful in their language. He himself is described as very careful in his choice of words. All the men who worked with him were careful and diligent students and were somewhat proficient in their general education.<sup>152</sup>

It will be remembered that Miller formulated the first Discipline and published the same in 1809. This was a veritable compendium of systematic theology.

John Driesbach<sup>153</sup> translated a small catechism that was published at the same time. The next year conference directed the ministers to give regular catechetical instruction to the young people.<sup>154</sup> In 1810 a German edition of the New Testament was published at the book establishment.<sup>155</sup>

The Christliche Botschafter<sup>156</sup> was established in 1835 and was read with interest. It is claimed for it that it is the

152. Albright and his Co-laborers pp. 108-9.

153. History of the Evangelical Association, Urwig p 51 Yeakel 101.

154. History of the Evangelical Association, Yeakel Vol. I p 106.

155. Ibid.

p 157

oldest German religious paper in America.

In 1839 arrangements were made for the publication of certain books that were deemed helpful to the members of the church in general and in 1841 Bishop Seybert ordered 27725 books to be taken to Illinois.<sup>157</sup> From the foregoing statements it is readily seen that strenuous efforts were made to indoctrinate and educate the people in the faith of the church. Everyone of the leaders was in hearty sympathy with this movement, and it is to be regretted that the need of better scientific and classical education was not more generally felt among both the laity and the clergy but especially among the latter.

Some of the ministers were very well educated for the time. It will be remembered that Henry Neibel<sup>158</sup> was a school teacher and was preparing to enter the Reformed ministry when he was converted at the home of Abraham Eyer. John Klinefelter<sup>159</sup> had mastered the Greek Testament until he could use it without difficulty. Doubtless there were some others but the most of them were so indifferent if not antagonistic that it seems that they were pointed out as being opposed to higher education. Both the Bishops Long and Seybert, John Driesbach and others felt the accusation keenly and in 1843 at the General conference at Greensburg, Ohio a declaration stating their position on the cause of education was drawn up and adopted. In this they asserted first of all that

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157. History of the Evangelical Association, Yeakel Vol. 1 p 242

158. Ibid. p 97

159. Ibid. II p 215

they believed that learning without spiritual qualification would not qualify a minister. They then stated that a general literary education was a great help to a man in the ministry and urged the young men preaching and intending to preach to procure as good an education as possible, and endeavor to become learned men.<sup>160</sup> The result of this resolution was to cause a vigorous discussion of both theological and scientific education. The ablest men of the church participated in this discussion. The cause of "High Schools" as they were termed, was the theme of many brilliant articles in the "Botschafter." This periodical had been somewhat hampered in the publishing of articles on education up to this time. One article had been published during 1840 and in 1841 a few more on such subjects as "I have no time to study," "Education of the Clergy" and "Science" had appeared.<sup>161</sup> These had come only after the accusation had been made that the Evangelical Association was placing a premium on ignorance. They had doubtless awakened the leaders to the fact that the young people of the church were to be considered and provision made for them to secure an education.

The first official action taken with regard to the education of the Ministry was taken by the General Conference at Greensburg, Ohio, in 1843. No action towards establishing a school was taken out but a committee consisting of Bishops Seybert, and Long, Adam Ettinger, J. C. Reisner and W. W. Orwig was appointed to devise a plan for the education of the ministry of the church. The work of the committee resulted in the drafting of a course of study to extend over four years. This was published in the Botschafter of

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160. History of The Evangelical Association, Yeckel, Vol. 2 P 97

161. Ibid.

Vol. 1, P 338.

March 1, 1844. The same was translated and published in the Evangelical Messenger in 1852.<sup>162</sup>

One of the most zealous champions of education in the ministry was the veteran John Driesbach. In 1845 he published an article in the "Christliche Botschafter" in which he argued that "Human Learning," sanctified by the Spirit of God would be highly advantageous to the minister for great usefulness in his calling.<sup>163</sup>

Soon after there appeared another article entitled "A learned ministry." The author hedges in his statements, yet he seems to inforce Driesbach's stand, though he admist that opposite views are held by the Evangelical Association as a body.<sup>164</sup> An editorial censuring the views expressed in the second article appeared in this same number of the periodical. This was followed by a number of articles for and against the cause of an educated ministry. This discussion carried on at irregular intervals resulted in many views being taken on the subject. By 1847 it was pretty evident that the time had come for some action. The majority seemed to favor an education for the ministry but they differed as to just what constituted the proper kind of an education for a minister. Many of the less enthusiastic brethern were inclined to think that the leaders intended to establish Theological Seminaries, or as they termed them, "Preacher Factories."<sup>165</sup> Most of the ministers seem to have been opposed to this step and they expressed their opinion of the "Preacher Factory" in a resolution

162. Evangelical Annals, p. 183.

163. The article referred to was entitled "Teachers and Preachers should not be ignorant" A digest was found in Orwig's History of the Evangelical Association, p. 398.

164. Orwig's History of Evangelical Association, p. 397-398.

165. Yeakel's " " "



adopted at the general conference session held at New Berlin in 1847. In this resolution they emphatically stated that they did not favor Theological Seminaries.<sup>166</sup> Rev. W. W. Orwig who was considered one of the leaders in the educational movement was the author of the resolution. It is generally understood that his resolution was directed against the Theological Seminary alone and not against the cause of Education in general.

John Driesbach was not daunted by the resolution against "Preacher factories" but at once offered the following resolution, "Resolved, that a seminary for general sciences be established in the Evangelical Association with the consent of the majority of the members, connected with manual labor by the pupils, in order thereby to defray the expenses of tuition, board, etc., with the understanding that no so called "preacher factory" is intended and it is expressly stipulated that it shall never be used for such purpose, because, according to our view, the preparation and sending out of Evangelical preachers is the work of God/ Nevertheless, we believe that it is our duty to put forth efforts that the Evangelical Association may become enriched in the manifold branches of knowledge which is, without question, very beneficial to every Christian and preacher and will be helpful to us in obtaining a correct knowledge of God and ourselves and will render the Holy Scriptures more edifying to us." The resolution was adopted and a vote of the entire church membership was ordered. John Driesbach and the Bishops were constituted a committee to report the facts to the various conferences whereupon each conference should elect a direc-

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166. Yeckel's History of Evangelical Association P 386.

tor. This committee was to be active in the organization, only in case the vote of the membership was favorable. There is no record that they were empowered to agitate the matter, although it is quite likely they did this in an unofficial capacity. Another resolution ordered an election during the conference year on every charge, for the purpose of determining the matter. This placed the project before the membership of the church.<sup>167</sup> The question seemed to be almost dropped for a time. Only a few articles relative to it appeared in the church papers. Among those that wrote favorably was Bishop Long. He was very pronounced in his views and wrote vigorously in favor of the establishment of the school. It failed to receive the required number of votes.<sup>168</sup> Driesbach and Long were much disappointed but they did not give up hope. The sentiment in favor of schools grew slowly but surely. In 1850 one of the special items recommended by the anniversary committee of the East Pennsylvania conference was the inaugurating of a campaign for funds with which to establish an academy for the education of the young people within their own conference borders. Two weeks later the West Pennsylvania conference went a step farther and appointed a committee to actually plan for the establishment of an academy.<sup>169</sup> It remained for the newly formed Pittsburg conference at its first session held in 1852 to take the final step that was to give the school movement its initial impetus.

A resolution to establish the school was passed, a committee to secure funds and a location was appointed, the name "Albright seminary of the Pittsburg conference of the Evangelical Association"

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167. Yeakel's History of Evangelical Association Vol. 1, P 386

168. Ibid. P 392.

169. Evangelical Annals P 199.

History of Evangelical Association Vol. 1, P 191.

was adopted and everything pointed to success for the new institution. The school opened under the principalship of Prof. J. F. Eberhart in Berlin, Pennsylvania, August, 1853. The citizens of Berlin were enthusiastic and showed their goodwill by holding a mass meeting in March of 1854 and subscribing \$4000 for the purpose of erecting a suitable building. They stipulated that when the school was moved into the new building the name should be changed to Berlin College. It seems that the people in the church were not quite ready for the advance step although the young people seem to have been ready for it, for there were 108 students reported that appeared as reported at the conference held in May of that year. Perhaps the proposition from the people at Berlin was partially responsible for the apathy. The term college doubtless suggested to them that the institution would be other than they desired, at any rate they lost interest and the school died from lack of support.<sup>170</sup> It did not live long but it lived long enough to convince many people that a school was needed and could be had if they persevered long enough.

The people of the Ohio conference were aroused and in 1855 the Ohio conference resolved to purchase Greensburg Seminary. Bishop Joseph Long, Chas. Hammer, and George F. Spreng were appointed a committee to purchase the building and John Driesbach, Chas. G. Koch and Elias Stoever were appointed a committee to draft a course of study. The Pittsburg conference united with the Ohio in the undertaking in 1856. The school was opened in October, 1855 with J. B. Reubelt as president. In 1857 A. A. Smith was elected principal and remained in that position until he was called to Naperville, Illinois to head the new school there. W. J. Hahn<sup>171</sup> who graduated

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170. Evangelical Annals P 199

History of Evangelical Association Vol. 2, P 218.

171. A part of this was related to me by the widow of

from Mt. Union College in 1859 was then chosen Principal. Prof. Hahn was an able man and was fairly successful in the educational work and had it been any other time that the time of the great Civil War which was rending the nation from east to west, it is quite likely that the insittution would have been a decided success. When the school faced financial ruin Bishop Long, who was in moderately good circumstances took the deed of the building and carried on the institution with his own means, but the burden became too heavy and in 1865 he was compelled to abandon it.

In 1854 the West Pennsylvania Conference decided to make an attempt to establish a school within their borders. They decided to raise \$15000 before attempting to do anything. When the amount was raised a site was secured at New Berlin, Pennsylvania and a building erected. In 1855 an invitation was extended to the East Pennsylvania conference to unite with them. It was accepted and the school was opened January 1856, as Union Seminary. W. W. Orwig who had offered the resolution condemning "Preacher factories" was the president.

The civil war broke out and many of the students enlisted. This crippled the school to such an extent that it was forced to suspend operations for a period of two years. In 1865 Rev. M. J. Carothers and a few others of the West Pennsylvania conference which had, by this time become the Central Pennsylvania conference, assumed the indebtedness of the school. They formed an educational aid society in the Central Pennsylvania Conference and again opened the school. In 1883 the school was again taken over by the Central Conference. In 1887 the name was changed to Central Pennsylvania College. This college went to the United Evangelical Church after

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Full accounts may be found in the charters on educational institutions in the Evangelical United Brethren Church's History.

the division of the church in 1894 and operated for a number of years as Central Pennsylvania College. In 1900 it was combined with Albright Collegiate Institute and the combined institution was named Albright College and located at Myerstown, Pennsylvania.

While the eastern men had been busy locating schools the western men had been considering the same subject and in 1861 their thoughts were given definite expression by the founding of Plainfield College at Plainfield, Illinois.

The first conferences to participate were the Illinois and Wisconsin, and after it had been decided to establish the school the Iowa conference was invited to join the movement and accepted the invitation. A. A. Smith who had been at the head of Greensburg Seminary was the first President and R. Dubs and Simon Tobias were the first financial agents. In 1864 it was moved from Plainfield, which is still without railroad facilities, except for a freight road and the Joliet and Southern electric railway, to Naperville. This location had a double advantage of being in one of the oldest Evangelical Association communities in the west, and at the same time on the main line of the C. B. & Q. railway. The graduates of this institution are found scattered all over the United States and Canada. Its name was changed to Northwestern College.<sup>172</sup>

After 1867 the attitude on education changed. The Discipline before this time had prohibited theological seminaries, but the sentiment now changed and there was a strong feeling that Theological Schools should be founded. The first of these was Union Biblical

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172. For full account of Northwestern college see Yeakel's History of Evangelical Association. The old building is used for a public school building in Plainfield.

Institute founded in connection with Northwestern College at Naperville in 1873. Special pains were taken at that time to prohibit the granting of the title, "Doctor of Divinity."

When once the Evangelical Association had taken a stand for education they attempted to make a general movement of it. The idea seems to have prevailed that the institutions of learning should be located in every section of the country. Had a centralized effort been put forth it is likely that they would have been more successful. Blairstown Seminary was established by the Iowa conference in Blairstown, Iowa in 1867. The school in its beginning was very unpretentious. W. J. Hahn, whom we have already mentioned as principal of Greensburg Seminary was the principal. For the first few terms it was carried on in the home of Professor Hahn. A little later it was moved to a building erected for the purpose. After being in existence thirteen terms it was closed and the principal went into the itinerant ministry.<sup>173</sup>

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173. Most of the information on Blairstown Seminary was given to me in a letter written April, 1914, by Mrs. W.J. Hahn who now resides at Cottage Hill, Florida.  
A short account is found in the Evangelical Annals P 200.

## CHAPTER VII.

Division of Evangelical Association and  
Organization of the United  
Evangelical Church.

One of the most noticeable features in the history of the west is the tendency to divide and re-divide. States were carved out of territory that was at one time considered a unit. The process was simple. As they became settled and civilization pushed westward communities developed a spirit of independence and asked to be allowed to manage their own affairs. The same development may be traced in the conference formation of the Evangelical Association. The frontier preachers pushed out and organized new charges. After a few, these new charges were organized and requested General conference that they be allowed to form a new conference. The request was granted and the next year they formed their own organization. This process of division was destined to be carried on to a greater extent in the Evangelical Association, not only was division to take place along territorial lines but division along the line of principles and policy.

While the Evangelical Association had been engaged in missionary work among the pioneers of the United States, difficulties which finally led to a division into two churches had been developing.

It is difficult to say just when the difficulty started. Stapleton of the United Evangelical Church dates it from the election of Esher in 1863. To us it appears that the difficulty originated much earlier than this. Various things had come up that caused friction in the church. In 1857 Solomon Neitz, a talented member of the East Pennsylvanis conference had published a pamphlet on the doctrine of entire sanctification that did not agree with the old-

fashioned idea of the Evangelical Association. At the next session of the East Pennsylvania conference he was charged with heresy but the charges were never voted on. At the general conference of 1859 the charges were again preferred by W. W. Orwig and the conference declared the doctrine as taught by Neitz to be contrary to the Articles of Faith of The Evangelical Association. While this controversy was not the immediate cause, the relations of the author of that much discussed pamphlet to Bishop Esher in the later years lead us to believe that it furnished a forerunner by stirring up a division among the ministry of the church, for it is known that the East Pennsylvania conference stood by Neitz when the charges were preferred against him. It is a well known fact that Neitz and Esher did not agree on the doctrine of sanctification. It has been further charged by R. Yeakel that the friends of Neitz instituted a caucus at the general conference in 1863 for the purpose of electing Neitz bishop. This was not successful and J. J. Eshar was elected to the episcopacy.

It is charged that Esher at once began to gather men who were favorable to his politics about him in official positions. In 1867 he and Neitz again disagreed on the doctrine of Entire Sanctification and Bishop Long ordered him to recall the objectionable article. Neitz refused and Long thereupon protested against the article in the Botschafter.

D. B. Byers, who was a presiding elder in Illinois at that time undertook to express his disapproval of the action of General Conference in an article which he read before the district meeting of Forreston, Illinois. He criticized very sharply the action with regard to Neitz and the first article of a report from a committee appointed to formulate the statement of the doctrine of Entire



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Sanctification. Both Bishop Esher and Bishop Long were members of the committee. Long requested him to recall the article. Byers refused and then Bishop Long preferred charges against him at his own conference. The conference reprimanded him and ordered him at once to give the article to one of the Bishops for destruction. Byers was not conquered and in 1870 when the "Living Epistle" endeavored to defend the idea of "Instantaneous reception of entire sanctification" Byers assailed it with considerable warmth.

Theophilus Clewell, the editor of the Evangelical Messenger, had championed the cause of Neitz in 1867 and when the question of Holiness came up in 1870 he again put forth his views through the paper which he was editing. The Board of Publication of which Bishop Esher was the chairman attempted to reprimand him. After some difficulty Clewell resigned. Reuben Yeakel was chosen his successor, charges him with trying to gain enough annual conferences to his side to cause trouble for the entire church.

Bishop Long died in 1869 but Esher made no attempt to fill his place but was the sole Bishop of the church for three years. In his address at the opening of the conference he is reported to have spoken of the disturbances in the church and then to have rejoiced because of the powerful movement of the Holy Spirit among them. At this session of the general conference (1871) Esher was reelected to the episcopacy and Reuben Yeakel was newly elected to take the place of Long.

At the next General Conference the question of electing four bishops caused much discussion but it finally carried and the old bishops were reelected and Thomas Bowman and Rudolph Dubs were newly elected. In the History of the Evangelical Association

Reuben Yeakel makes the significant statement, "Of course the majority of the general conference believed that these places were well provided for, but some of the members had their misgivings." This is a significant phrase because the only ones of the ten general officials elected at that time who left the church in the final division were Rudolph Dubs and Jacob Hartzler. In the spring of 1882 Esher's son and Bowman's daughter were married. This, according to Stapleton united Dubs and Bowman and they began the policy of running things without Dubs.

This trouble between Dubs and Esher became very apparent in the conference of 1879 when Dubs and D. B. Byers who had been censured in 1867 by Bishop Long for upholding Solomon Neitz were elected delegates to the Ecumenical conference of Methodism. This choice was not acceptable to Esher and Bowman so at the meeting of the Board of Bishops in October, 1880, Bishop Thomas Bowman and H. Hintze were constituted delegates on the ground that Dubs and Byers had been only a committee on arrangements. Dubs asserted that he and Byers were delegates and that these other men were additional delegates. This led to a bitter controversy in the course of which Esher accused Dubs of falsehood. The General conference of 1883 resolved itself into a committee of the whole body and listened to the charges and then directed the bishops to settle their difficulty privately. Outwardly this was done at a meeting held at Bowman's home but the difficulty soon broke out again.

Esher now went to Japan to visit the mission under the direction of Jacob Hartzler. His reports on the work and his attitude toward the Superintendent caused severe criticism from H. B. Hartzler, the editor of the Evangelical Messenger. A controversy ensued in which Esher claimed that his report was an official docu-

ment and not a proper subject for criticism.

It is charged by the minority side that a secret caucus was held at the home of an official in Cleveland and the defeat of everyone in sympathy of the Minority was planned.

At the general conference in 1887 Attorney E. B. Esher and two ministers brought charges against H. B. Hartzler, and after much wrangling he was deposed from the editor's chair. The Minority entered a protest but Bishop Bowman who was in the chair at the time the protest was entered refused to allow it to be entered on record on the ground that it contained allegations that were untrue and that the offering of the protest was rebellion against the authority of the church.

All the Bishops were reelected, in spite of the fact that there had been a continuous wrangle among them for a number of years so there was no hope of peace. The men who had been denied the right of protest organized The Evangelical Publishing Company and began to publish the "Evangelical." Esher and his friends on the other hand began the task of deposing those who had ventured to criticize their actions.

The old charge of falsehood was renewed against Dubs and when he attempted to reply he found the church papers closed against him. This was in 1889 and in the next year he was cited to appear at Cleveland to answer charges. He was suspended from the Bishop's office. He respected the suspension and moved to Chicago and became the editor of "The Deutsche Allegemeine Zeitung."

Shortly after the suspension of Dubs, which the Cleveland Leader brands as a gross outrage, both Bowman and Esher were suspended. A farcial trial before three of their friends in which they were exonerated, is charged by Stapleton. After this proceeding they

declared that their accusers and all who participated in the trial had forfeited their membership.

They now appeared before the annual conferences and attempted to preside in an official capacity. Five conferences refused them the right to preside. At the Illinois, Des Moines, and Oregon conferences on being refused the right of presiding they withdrew and organized rival conferences.

The next year Bowman appeared before the two Pennsylvania and the Pittsburg conferences and attempted to preside. In all three cases he was refused the presidency. He tried the same thing that he had done in the west the year before with the result that about one-fourth of the ministers of the east Pennsylvania conference went with him. The others remained intact.

The discipline of the Evangelical Association provided that if the date and place of the next general conference was left undecided by the general conference the oldest annual conference should decide it. Under this rule the East Pennsylvania conference designated Philadelphia as the place. The Board of Publication appointed the conference at Indianapolis. The minority, as Dubs and his adherents were called, elected delegates to the Philadelphia conference while the others elected delegates to the Indianapolis conference. About two-fifths of the delegates were at the Philadelphia conference. Each body elected a full set of officials and prepared to carry on the affairs of the church without the others. This resulted in legal proceedings for the possession of the property. In every state except Nebraska the property was given to the adherents of Esher and Bowman. This makes the division of the church into two bodies. In 1894, when it became apparent that the property was to go to the Majority, the

Minority called a general conference to meet at Naperville and organized as a separate body.

Such is the history of the division as recorded by Yeakel and Stapleton. We do not care to undertake to fix the blame for the division. The older men in the United Evangelical Church which is the Minority party generally charge Esher with High Churchism and usurpation of power. While some of the present Evangelical Association charge Dubs and the Minority with rebellion.

Judging from the line of division it seems to us that it is the culmination of a series of events reaching back into the fifties or perhaps even farther.

This movement is one of the many movements that characterized the west. It is a part of the history of the west. The leaders in the division were western men. The hardest legal battles were fought in the west. The most intense personal feeling was found in the western states. When the United Evangelical Church was organized in 1894, the organization was effected in Naperville Illinois, a western town.

Rudolph Dubs, who was elected one of the bishops was an Illinois man. Even more noticeable is the American spirit which dominated the new organization. The Polity was strictly American. Years of experience had taught them that they must not give power to men unless they wanted them to use it. So the power of the Bishops was limited as was also the number of consecutive terms a bishop might serve. The laity reserved a voice in the conferences. The new spirit was shown again at the Johnstown general conference by the adoption of an English course of study first and the German course later. This is especially significant when we recall that in the pioneer days the itinerant of the Evangelical

Association had passed by without stopping in the English communities and that English preaching had been granted only because certain communities demanded it and some of the men were far sighted enough to see that if they wished to retain their young people they must preach to them in the language that was used in the school and official life of the community.

These facts are evidence of the development of a strictly American type of people in the church. Instead of attempting to be a German church for the Germans in America, as the Evangelical Association had been in its early days, the United Evangelical Church was organized as an American church, adapted to the needs of the cosmopolitan population of America. It therefore may be regarded as one of the products of the great westward movement in America.

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The events leading up to the division are narrated by Yeakel in his History of the Evangelical Association as far as the year 1875.

All the published History of the division that is obtainable is found in the Evangelical Annals. It must be taken with due allowance for the fact that the Author is a member of the Minority party and that he wrote his account while the memory of the division was still fresh. Judging however from the quotations from various periodicals of the day I think his account is quite fair.



## CHAPTER IX.

## Summary.

In this thesis we have attempted to trace the beginning and development of one of the institutions of a great western nation. The Evangelical Association was founded and developed in American soil. It is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, churches organized from the beginning in America.

We have sought to bring out the leading characteristics of the people and leaders of the early church in the first two chapters. We have then noted the growth from a few scattered followers of Albright into a definite organization. The pioneer preacher in his work of building up, not one, but many conferences in the developing west has been followed in his work through Ohio, and the central West to the Pacific coast. We have seen the loyal soldier of the Evangelical Association shoulder his musket and go with his comrades to the defense of the flag. The circumstances leading up to the founding of Educational institutions have been carefully reviewed.

Then the rise of the spirit which led to the division of the Evangelical Association and the formation of the purely American type of church in the United Evangelical Church has been pointed out. There has been no attempt to laud the church, for anything. The aim has been to show how the church has developed as a part of the great American west.